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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

O God of lights, whom to find is life and whom to miss is tragedy, we thank You for bringing us through the hurricane.

Lord, help us to make You the one fixed star of our hope. Empower our Senators with the faith to face the future with confidence. Give each of us the wisdom to realize that right is more important than might. Enable us to live today with calm assurance, glowing enthusiasm, vibrant faith, personal integrity, and righteous abandon. May we not simply refuse the overtures of evil, but help us also to choose the highest good.

We pray this in Your strong name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today the Senate will resume debate on H.R. 2691, the Interior appropriations bill. We currently have five amendments which are pending to the bill. This afternoon the two managers will be discussing which of those amendments will be ready for Senate votes.

I announced last week that we would be voting today and asked that the

managers consider beginning that vote—we will probably have two votes, although we will be discussing that over the afternoon—at 5:30 this afternoon. If further debate is necessary on amendments or we are unable to set a time certain for the votes on those amendments it will be my intention to schedule a judicial nomination tonight. So I am pretty certain we will be voting about 5:30, but as soon as we firm that up after discussion with the leadership on both sides we will make that known to our colleagues.

With respect to the remainder of the week, we will try to finish the Interior appropriations bill as early as possible tomorrow. The managers were here Thursday and continued to work through this past Thursday morning. They, of course, are here and will continue to be here through the afternoon and early evening, although I do not want to encourage any new amendments. If anybody is at all considering amendments, we must have those come forward as soon as possible.

Following completion of the Interior appropriations bill, as we mentioned last week, we will continue with the appropriations process. We will possibly begin consideration of the DC appropriations bill, although I want to talk to the chairman of the Appropriations Committee and the various managers. We will consult with the leadership, the managers, and the appropriate committee chairmen to make that determination as we move a little bit closer.

We finished last week very strong, and as a number of conference reports become ready, I anticipate bringing them to the floor this week, if possible. We could schedule hopefully those conference reports with short time agreements and votes this week.

At the end of last week, I also mentioned that there are 11 judicial nominations on today's Executive Calendar. Six are ready to be scheduled for votes, and I will be scheduling these for floor

action over the course of the next couple of days.

At an appropriate time, I want to make a brief statement and would be happy to turn to the assistant leader of the other side for any comments about the week or the schedule for clarification for our colleagues.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have spoken to the Democratic manager of the bill; I have not had the opportunity to speak to Senator BURNS. But we do have a very important appropriations hearing at 2:30, and I understand these two managers may wish to go there. Senator BINGAMAN is on his way over to offer an amendment, so we should have some activity on the floor this afternoon.

As the leader indicated, there is an amendment or two that we could vote on this evening. I have been informed, as the leader has just indicated, that he wants to do at least one judge tonight. So I think we are going to have one or two votes tonight with ease and still have a shot at finishing this bill tomorrow.

EFFECTS OF HURRICANE ISABEL

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I will comment on a couple of subjects. First, with regard to the natural disaster we had last Thursday and Thursday night, the tragedies continue to unfold in regard to damage along the east coast. As I walk around the Capitol today, it is very clear to me a large number of people on Capitol Hill, from Maryland, Virginia, and the surrounding areas have been struck very hard. A number of people are without electricity and clean water and are really suffering daily right now as I speak. I have spoken to different people asking if their

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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